

Hong Leong Bank Berhad

Building relationships and adding value by providing clarity in financial decisions

A mid-sized bank with a Chinese merchant heritage, HLB enjoyed a solid reputation in its traditional segment of Chinese retail customers and small businesses in Malaysia. However, in an increasingly competitive and liberalized industry, these segments were under threat, and HLB's conservative Chinese image limited its appeal to a broader customer set. Inconsistency and under-investment in communications were diluting HLB's brand presence in the marketplace. FutureBrand's challenge was to reposition HLB to broaden the brand's appeal and to reflect an extension of its financial offering to include investment and financial products. Without changing the logo, FutureBrand was also tasked with developing a distinctive and consistent visual language for the brand.

Research unveiled a general dissatisfaction towards banks --- particularly in the way its products were sold with little regard for its customers' interests. A positioning, inspired by the idea of earning trust by bringing "clarity" back into financial relationships, was developed to address this dissatisfaction and align with the corporate philosophy of building relationships. "Clarity" implies that a bank that is open, straightforward, facilitative and well organized in its customer interactions. Business implications were identified to align the bank's delivery capabilities with the brand. In addition, the brand was given a "fresher," more contemporary personality and expression.

The new brand introduces a novel proposition in an undifferentiated marketplace and provides a clear guide for business transformation, from the branch environment to product organization. It places HLB in a position of strength in a marketplace where customer loyalty and "cross-selling" has become critical. Positioning HLB as an effective "facilitator" also fits well with the greater role of investments and insurance products in driving future bank profits.

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FutureBrand

